Reconstitution of Inter State Council

*191. SHRI K. C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Inter State Council has been reconstituted in recent months;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether meeting of the newly reconstituted Inter State Council is proposed to be held shortly, and if so, the subject to be discussed therein?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Inter-State Council was reconstituted *vide* the Ministry of Home Affairs, Inter-State Council Secretariat Notification No. 43/2/91-ISC, dated the 11th November, 1999. The following members of the Union Council of Ministers were nominated by the Prime Minister to be members of the Inter-State Council in terms of clause 2(d) of the Inter-State Council Order, 1990:—

(i) Shri L. K. Advani	—	Minister of Home Affairs
(ii) Shri George Fernandes	—	Minister of Defence
(iii) Shri Yashwant Sinha	—	Minister of Finance
(iv) Shri Murasoli Maran	—	Minister of Commerce & Industry
(v) Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu	—	Minister of Chemicals & Fertilizers
(vi) Shri Jaswant Singh	—	Minister of External Affairs.

The Prime Minister also approved that the following members of the Union Council of Ministers would be permanent invitees to the Council:—

(i) Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi	—	Minister of Human Resource Development

(ii) Shri Naveen Patnaik — Minister of Mines and Minerals

(iii) Ms. Mamta Banerjee — Minister of Railways.

(c) The date for holding the next meeting of the Inter-State Council has not been fixed as yet. However, a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Inter-state Council is being convened in April, 2000. It may be mentioned that agenda items are first discussed in the standing Committee before those are brought up for discussion in the Inter-State Council.

Licence for Mining Diamonds in M.P.

†*192. SHRI RAGHAVJI: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Madhya Pradesh had ever sought the permission during the last three years regarding issuance of prospecting licence for the mining of diamonds;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what was the length of experience of the persons or firms/companies in the field of mining; in favour of whom the State Government had recommended to issue licence;

(d) whether the Central Government had permitted to issue the said licence; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The State Government of Madhya Pradesh had sent a proposal to the Government of India in November, 1998 seeking Central Government's approval under Section 5(1) of the Mines & Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 to the grant of a prospecting licence for airborne geophysical survey, exploration and

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.